WE CLAIM AS OUR INVENTION:

1.	A method for automatically processing studies acquired by an imaging examination system comprising the steps of:

for each study in a plurality of studies acquired by an imaging examination system having a first computer connected via a network to a plurality of further computers, said method comprising the steps of:

for each study in a plurality of studies acquired by said imaging examination system, assigning a priority code indicating a relative priority for processing that study;

dependent on said priority code, either immediately processing said study on said first computer, or intermediately storing said study in a memory device for later processing and allocating respective identifiers, in a processing job list, to all studies stored in said memory and, at respective later points in time, processing the studies stored in the memory in said processing job list according to a predetermined sequence; and

for processing said studies stored in said memory at said respective later points in time, checking respective availabilities of said further computers for processing one of said studies according to said processing job list, and communicating one of said studies according to said processing job list to one of said further computers having availability and automatically processing the study in said one of said other computers having availability.

2.   A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the step of checking availability of said other computers comprises checking a workload of the respective other computers.

3.   A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein each study has a study type associated therewith, and comprising allocating said priority code to the respective study dependent on the study type.

4.   A method as claimed in claim 1 comprising, before assigning said priority code to a study, automatically pre-evaluating at least a portion of that study and assigning said priority code dependent on said pre-evaluation.

5.   A method as claimed in claim 4 wherein said study includes an image comprising image features and at least one defined limit value, and wherein the step of pre-evaluating at least a part of the study comprises analyzing at least one of said image feature and said at least one defined limit value.

6.   A method as claimed in claim 1 comprising the additional steps of monitoring an occupancy of said network and transmitting a study from said memory to said one of said other computers only if the occupancy of said network does not exceed a predetermined threshold.

7.   A method as claimed in claim 1 comprising ordering said studies in said predefined sequence according to said priority codes.

8.   A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein said network has a central computer connected thereto, and comprising the steps of administering said processing job list in said central computer by, in said central computer, checking the respective availabilities of said other computers and initiating transmission of said one of said studies from said memory to said one of said other computers having availability for processing the study.

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9.   A method as claimed in claim 8 comprising the additional step of, in said central computer, monitoring an occupancy of said network and transmitting said one of said studies from said memory to said one of said other computers only if said occupancy of the network does not exceed a predetermined threshold.

10.   A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein said plurality of studies include interrelated studies, and comprising processing said interrelated studies in common either in said first computer or said one of said other computers dependent on the priority code of at least one said interrelated studies.

11.   A computerized system for automatically processing studies acquired by an imaging examination system, said computerized system comprising:

a first computer connected to an imaging examination system that acquires a plurality of studies;

a priority allocation module that allocates respective priority codes to said studies according to a relative processing priority;

a plurality of other computers in communication with said first computer, each of said first computer and said plurality of other computers comprising a processor for automatically processing said studies;

a memory accessible by said first computer and said other computers; and

dependent on the priority code allocated to a study, either said first computer automatically processing that study or that study being intermediately stored in said memory and being allocated an identifier in a processing job list for all studies stored in said memory; and

a module for checking respective availabilities of said other computers and transmitting one of said studies from said memory according to said processing job list to one of said other computers dependent on the availability of said one of said other computers.

12. A computerized system as claimed in claim 11 wherein said module checks the respective availabilities of the other computers by checking the respective workloads of the other computers.

13. A computerized system as claimed in claim 11 wherein said priority allocation module comprises a user interface allowing manual entry of respective priority codes for said plurality of studies.

14. A computerized system as claimed in claim 11 wherein said priority allocation module comprises a priority allocation memory containing a list of study types, and wherein said priority allocation module allocates said priority codes dependent on a study type of each study in said plurality of studies.

15. A computerized system as claimed in claim 11 wherein said first computer includes a pre-evaluation module which, before allocation of said priority code by said priority allocation module, automatically implements a pre-evaluation of at least a part of a study, thereby obtaining pre-evaluation data, and communicates said pre-evaluation data to said priority allocation module, and wherein said priority allocation module allocates a priority code to that study dependent on the pre-evaluation data for that study.

16. A computerized system as claimed in claim 15 wherein said pre-evaluation module comprises an image processing unit, for analyzing features of an image associated with the study.

17. A computerized system as claimed in claim 11 wherein said first computer and said other computers are in communication via a network, and wherein said module for transmitting said one of said studies from said memory to said one of said other computers monitors an occupancy of said network and transmits said one of said studies to said one of said other computers only if the occupancy of said network does not exceed a predetermined threshold.

18. A computerized system as claimed in claim 11 further comprising a central computer containing said module, said central computer administering said processing job list using said module.

19. A computerized system as claimed in claim 18 wherein said first computer and said other computers are in communication with each other via a network, and wherein said central computer monitors an occupancy of said network and initiates transmission of said one of said studies to said one of said other computers only if the occupancy of the network does not exceed a predetermined threshold.